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HISTORY,  
PRINCIPLES, PRACTICE, AND RESULTS  
OF THE  
HAMILTONIAN SYSTEM.

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BY JAMES HAMILTON.

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*Price Sixpence.*





THE  
HISTORY,  
PRINCIPLES, PRACTICE, AND RESULTS  
OF THE  
HAMILTONIAN SYSTEM.

WITH  
ANSWERS TO THE EDINBURGH AND WESTMINSTER  
REVIEWS;  
A LECTURE DELIVERED AT LIVERPOOL;  
AND  
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE USE OF THE BOOKS PUBLISHED  
ON THE SYSTEM.

BY JAMES HAMILTON.



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## HAMILTONIAN SYSTEM, &amp;c.

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IN the year 1798, being established as a merchant in Hamburg, where I had purchased a house in the Neuen Burg for 48,000 banco marks, and had been made free of the city, a friend recommended to me strongly, as a teacher of the German language, a General D'Angeli, a French émigré, who had been several years in the Austrian service. I told the General I should be glad to profit by his talents; but unfortunately my mind was so filled with business, that I was afraid I could not bend it to the study of grammar. "But sir, I shall never put a grammar into your hands!"—"Well! if you can teach me a language without grammar, I shall be glad to see you to-morrow morning." I had studied the Latin for several years, I knew some Greek, and was well acquainted with the best authors in French and English (having resided in France nearly three years before the Revolution); I considered myself somewhat of a linguist, and was a little piqued at the idea of being told by a military gentleman how a language should be taught. The next morning the General arrived with a book of anecdotes in German, of which he translated one for me nearly word for word, parsing as he proceeded; so that, when he had ended, I translated and understood it as well as so much

French or English. I confess I remained astounded at the result ; but not being able to doubt it, I continued my lesson, and learned thus five or six short anecdotes in an hour. On this plan I received about a dozen lessons, when I found I could read an easy German book ; and having about that time occasion to go to Leipsic and other parts of Germany, I took care to lodge at German houses, and thus acquired a tolerable facility in speaking and reading the language.—This is the origin of the Hamiltonian System : I then thought as little of becoming a teacher as I do now of flying ; but I was amateur of languages enough to appreciate my obligations to General D'Angeli, and think it but justice to record them here. I then recollected something of the same kind at the school of two ancient Jesuits, Messrs. Beatty and Mulhall, men of great talents and learning, who, on the dissolution of their order by Ganganelli, had established a school in Dublin, at which I remained four years. It was the custom of one of these gentlemen to translate, for the higher classes, twenty or twenty-five lines of Horace or Virgil every day, in the same manner that General D'Angeli translated the German, except that he did not parse (it was unnecessary for boys who had for many years studied the Latin grammar) ; but while I took lessons in German, and often since, it has occurred to me, that if our masters had from the beginning thus translated for their pupils not twenty lines but several pages, every day, we should have learned Latin in a tenth part of the time we had spent at it.

Four years afterwards, I established a house in Paris, not as an Englishman, but as a citizen of Hamburg ; and, in conjunction with the banking-house of Karcher and Co., I did considerable business with England during the peace of Amiens.

At the rupture of the treaty of Amiens, I was made prisoner, notwithstanding the representations of the senate of Hamburg in my favour. All they could obtain was, that my name should be effaced from the list of prisoners of war, and my Passport, or Carte de Sureté, had “*effacé de la liste des prisonniers de guerre*,” as a citizen of Hamburg, inscribed on it : but as a *natif* of England, I was detained during the war, to the ruin of my business in Hamburg and in Paris.

In 1814, I revisited England and Holland; but the commercial world was then so totally changed, that I found to do business again I must become an *apprentice* ; I was then forty-five ; it was *too late*. I determined, therefore, to go to the United States, and become a farmer and manufacturer of potash, of which I thought I knew more than the Americans. This project I put in execution the following year, and had actually agreed for a small farm, 250 miles to the north-west of New York; and was on horseback on my way to see it, at seven o'clock in the morning in October, 1815. The cold was severe, and the pain in both my feet intolerable. In this state I reflected, as I passed through the woods, how I should be able to bear a frost of four months, during which the ground would be covered with snow, and the cold much more intense? I considered it impossible, and, bravely yielding to this impression, I turned my horse's head about, to the utter astonishment of my guide, who in vain represented to me, that we were within a mile of the farm; and halted not till I arrived in New York, three days afterwards!—having retraced in that time a journey which it had taken me three weeks to perform.

I had in France, for my amusement, tried on my own children and on others, though to no great extent, the new ideas I had conceived as to teaching the languages; and

as I was no farmer, and thought it at least possible I might not succeed in that business, I had determined, in the midst of the *ennui* and fever of my voyage to New York, to try the experiment of it, *in case of need*; not as any thing permanent, but as a *pis-aller*, till something better offered. This was the plan I resolved now to execute for the winter, promising myself in the spring to set out afresh on my farming expedition.

Preparatory to this I wrote an *Essay on the usual mode of teaching the languages*, in which I explained the ideas I had myself on the subject; and while I acknowledged I had never given a lesson for money, I stated my confidence in the success of the mode of teaching which I proposed. Having finished my manuscript, I submitted it to the inspection of the Rev. Mr. Feltus, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, who so much approved of it, that he became himself with his two sons my first pupils: at the same time I taught two other clergymen; and all three, together with Judge Van Ness, of the district court, gave me the most flattering testimonials. I was, indeed, myself so astonished and delighted at the progress made by these gentlemen, particularly the last, that I gave the details of it in the papers of the day; which produced so favourable an impression on the public mind, that my whole time was soon engaged, at a dollar a lesson for each person, and I began to think teaching a better trade than farming.

The progress of my pupils was, however, nothing equal to what I have since produced; but it was indubitably greater than had ever been effected on the common plan. There was, indeed, nothing then that could be called a system, although two important principles formed the best possible foundation for one. *I taught*, instead of *ordering to learn*; and secondly, I taught my pupils to



*translate at once*, instead of making them get a grammar by heart. I had tried to parse also, as well as translate, as D'Angeli had done with me, but I found *this would do only with linguists*. The grammar was incomprehensible at this period to the greater number of my pupils. I therefore deferred it till they had taken half the course: by that time, as they had met in their reading all the inflections of the verbs, and changes of the other declinable parts of speech, thousands of times, they found grammar an easy task. I then gave them two or three lectures on grammar generally, but particularly the verbs, of which I gave them a copy; and from this period my pupils read *at their own home*, and in class learned the use of the words they had acquired in reading. They read the English Gospel of St. John into French, first after me, in precisely the same manner as I had taught them first to translate French into English, but with this essential difference, my translation into French was a free translation—in simple but correct language, which they afterwards wrote; and in the correcting of which I gave them the details of the principles or rules of grammar, and thus taught them to write and speak correctly.

During the first campaign, which lasted from the beginning of February till June, I took no class through the course. My pupils read French with facility and pleasure in twenty-four lessons, of two hours each: they had then no keys, they were content with their progress, and with their progress proclaimed the fame of my system wherever they went. I had thus, in the first year, about seventy pupils, who paid me twenty-four dollars each for half a course, and which confirmed me a teacher for life.

But in America as well as England, many teachers, out-heroding Herod, imagined that the system did really

more than I professed, or that it did all I professed in every instance ; and that teaching would hereafter become like *weaving*, a mere mechanical process ; that languages might be obtained not only without study, but even without attending the class. I have had in all my classes since, persons who seemed to be of this opinion, and who, neither attending nor studying, fancied they should get the language infallibly, because they had paid their subscription. But teachers dreaded there, as many in England yet do, the ruin of their establishments by the introduction of the system into schools generally ; and though they did not come forward openly to oppose it by arguments, far less by facts, yet did they see with pleasure the virulent attacks of anonymous writers, or tirades of abuse from those French teachers who considered me an intruder on their profession. A second winter in New York proved still more successful than the first : besides the number who took twelve or twenty-four lessons, a class of gentlemen went through the whole course triumphantly, and realized the utmost success I had ever predicted, speaking and writing the French with nearly as much facility as English.

I proceeded thence to Philadelphia, in September, where my reception was still more flattering than in New York, and where, by the discussions which took place, I first perceived that in translating I ANALYZED, and consequently taught the grammar of the language with every word I taught my pupil : forming thus a THIRD PRINCIPLE of the system, a principle which it is inconceivable should have escaped the genius of Milton, of Locke, of Clarke, of Dumarsais and his followers, all of whom eulogized literal translations as the only rational mode of acquiring a language, but not one of whom ever translated *one line* literally, for no translation

can justly be called literal which is not analytical. This difference was the sole reason why the translations of all these authors have been found inefficient, and even mischievous, and have therefore been justly scouted from the schools of all countries ; and for this reason it is that the translations lately made, professedly Hamiltonian, but which are not *analytical*, as well as the translations professedly on the system of Locke—not one word of either of which can be relied on by the pupil as the precise meaning of the word above it—have equally failed, and will for ever fail. I had, however, at this time, no books ; my system rested wholly with myself ; and as few men possessed such a knowledge as I did of the English and French languages (which latter I principally taught), few or none could rival me. I felt this, and was, perhaps, not perfectly guiltless of illiberality and selfishness in thus keeping my system to myself, till some time after my arrival in England, in order that I might be without a rival in teaching—for on my system, I found as much facility in teaching 100 persons (which I often did) as a class of half a dozen ; but with books any man *could* do as much as I, as has been triumphantly proved in England, provided he be willing to do as much ; but many pretended Hamiltonian teachers have disgraced the system and themselves, by effecting much less than they promised.

In Philadelphia I delivered my first lecture, and here my mode of teaching began to assume the character as well as the name of a *system* ; by which I mean, such a reunion and combination of certain fixed fundamental principles, as may enable the teacher to produce certain positive results, at all times and from every pupil, supposing a moderate degree of attention. Here, I first asserted that the words of all languages have, with few

exceptions, one meaning only, and should be translated generally by the same word, which should stand for its representative at all times, and in all places ; thus constituting a **FOURTH** principle : and, **FIFTHLY**, that the simple sounds of all languages being, with *few exceptions*, identically the same, it must be as easy for an Englishman to pronounce French as English, when *taught*, and *vice versâ*. Here, I first made the distinction between *accent* and *pronunciation*, so generally confounded, the latter being a distinct articulate utterance, the former the tone or song with which we speak ; that the latter can be communicated to any person, the former is incommunicable ; the latter may be perfect with every accent, but all accent as far as it goes is *a vice* ; of importance, however, only when it degenerates into brogue. In all my classes I have demonstrated the infallible certainty of acquiring a correct pronunciation, by being *taught* in class by a person possessing himself a correct pronunciation. The reunion of these different principles justified the title of *system* by their results ; but the reunion of them in a class so constructed, that each individual member should be an assistance rather than an incumbrance to every other, in which one man could teach as many as could hear him, and where number added to the interest and pleasure of the lesson, constituted a **SIXTH** and last principle more important than all the others. To distinguish it from other *soi-disant* systems, I thought myself justified in calling it Hamiltonian, and the public have confirmed the appellation.

The system, to be perfect, wanted only books : I printed in Philadelphia the first three chapters of the Gospel of St. John in French, with an *analytical* key, from which I found immense relief to myself as well as benefit to the pupil ; and after remaining a year, I pro-



ceeded to Baltimore, where the fame of my system had already preceded me, and enabled me to form immediately numerous classes.

After teaching here about six months adult pupils, to occupy the leisure of my wife and daughters I had just taken about twenty children, when I was attacked by the Professors of Baltimore College, who, in a play represented by their pupils, endeavoured to ridicule the *New Mode of teaching*. As they made no secret of their intention, I had no difficulty in procuring a ticket; and using the privilege of a spectator, three days afterwards I gave the play at full length in one of the newspapers, with such comments on the play and actors, as raised a good deal of laughter at the expense of the author. The President replied with great virulence; thence a paper war which lasted three months, during which the Hamiltonian System was fully discussed in its theory and results, and contrasted so successfully with the systems of the schools, that the College was obliged to close its doors, not having a single pupil, while, in the same time, the Hamiltonian school had increased to above one hundred and sixty.

This school, which counted nearly twenty teachers, each occupying a separate room, I fear not to say, effected wonders, though it wanted an indispensable part of the system when applied to schools, that is, *analytical translations*. The want of them caused me enormous expense and enormous labour, which, added to an extraordinary pressure on commerce that year, the wretched state of my health from excessive labour and the heat of the climate, and, above all, the yellow fever, which made its appearance about July,—all this obliged me to give up my school to the teachers whom I had employed, but who, unhappily, knew not how to conduct it, and suffered it shortly afterwards to fall.

I went on to Washington, where healthful air and idleness soon gave me strength to lecture; and where I got introduced to most of the principal men of the Federal Government, and, among others, to Mr. Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury, whose two sons I taught, and who furnished me with letters to the American Ambassador in London; as did several others, for I was determined, sooner or later, to offer my discovery to the investigation of my countrymen.

I thence proceeded to Boston, where I remained for five weeks, offering my system and my lessons *in vain*; I could obtain no pupils. At length a celebrated Unitarian Preacher and Professor of the University attacked my advertisement, and treated my pretensions as those of a charlatan. I had the day before begun to teach my first class, *four* pupils. In answer to this attack, with which I acknowledge I was much pleased, I invited the writer and his friends to come to my apartments on that day fortnight, and, by their own examination of my pupils, convince themselves whether I was or not the person he was pleased to represent me. My answer created a considerable sensation in town, and the result became the object of general interest. On the appointed day the Professor did not come, but seven gentlemen of acknowledged erudition and respectability, among whom an ex-governor of the State and one or two judges, did come, and examined my pupils most minutely. During the examination (in which I took myself no part) they repeatedly expressed their admiration of the accuracy of the translation, and the correctness of their pronunciation. They each gave me next day a distinct testimony, couched in the strongest language, to the merits of the system. These testimonies I published, and obtained by them not less than two hundred pupils.

I left Boston only in June, when the heat became

intolerable ; and, after passing some weeks at Balstown, and visiting some other places, I returned to Philadelphia in winter, where I obtained above three hundred pupils.

Besides the places I have mentioned, I visited a great number of towns in the interior during the summers I passed in the States ; as also the colleges of Schenectady, Princeton, Yale, Hartford, and Middleburg ; where I counted as my pupils, not only a very considerable number of the students, but also the professors, with the exception of Yale College, where the students only attended. I experienced in all a degree of liberality, which contrasted strongly with their pre-conceived opinions. All had imagined the system mere charlatanerie ; all recognised its merits before I departed.

In 1822 I went to Montreal, and thence to Quebec, and succeeded tolerably well in both places. And thus ended, in July 1823, my career in America. But, before I quit it to pursue this history in the United Kingdom during the last five years, let me be permitted to mention a circumstance which occurred in Montreal.

I had among my pupils the gaoler, by whose invitation I visited the gaol ; there were, among others, eight Englishmen confined for different offences. These I formed into a class, and determined to try on them the effects of my system in teaching the English their own language ; seven of these persons knew more or less of reading or spelling, though some of them very little ; one only knew not one letter. I gave them all children's books of the same kind, and placing the wholly ignorant man last of the class at my left hand, I made all the others spell, word by word, a sentence composed of words familiar to the pupils, as, " The cat loves mice ; " " John is a good boy," &c. &c. I began by articulating



audibly T—H—E—the : the first member at my right repeated in the same tone T—H—E—the, while I continued to point to each letter as it was pronounced, to the pupil on the left hand : when the word had come round to him, he repeated with facility and pleasure, pointing to the letters T—H—E—the ! Thus did we with each word in succession ; and after spelling all the words in the same manner, I read the whole phrase, which was read by each member of the class till it came to my left hand pupil, who also read it with facility : four short phrases were thus read, and perfectly acquired in about three-quarters of an hour. I then gave one of the prisoners full directions for proceeding, promising him half a dollar a week ; and this task he executed so successfully, that, having called to see them at the end of ten days, I found my pupil could read, with facility and perfect understanding, in any part of the Testament ! I have made many efforts since that time to introduce this plan into schools ; but, strange to tell, it has, with few exceptions, met with almost uniform opposition. Lately, however, I began a class of five children, at St. Philip's Church Sunday School, Manchester. All were wholly ignorant of their letters, and one or two not more than five or six years old. I gave them one lesson, and have been assured, that, at the end of about twelve lessons, they were found fit to enter the Testament reading class. Mr. Andrews, a schoolmaster of Salford, has also introduced it into his school, and has enabled a class of very small children, not knowing one letter, to read English with tolerable facility in about two months, with a pleasure and interest to pupil and teacher, contrasting most strongly with the labour and disgust incident to both on the common plan.



Thus is the Hamiltonian System applicable to education in all its parts. In my school in Baltimore, I applied it to writing, arithmetic, and geography, with the fullest success, and always to the delight of the pupil—always pleased with instruction when he can obtain it without arduous labour or unnecessary delay: and, above all, when it is intelligible. I here again offer my gratuitous services to every Institution willing to adopt the system, in any or all its parts, whether for children or adults—whether for English or other languages; and though I do not engage to work long for nothing, yet I promise that my instructions shall be so clear, as to enable any honest and well-informed teacher to do as much as I profess being able to do myself.

This history of my success in the United States, where I counted among my pupils many of the first men in the country, of all professions, and whose unanimous approbation had doubtless a little inflated a naturally enthusiastic imagination, was necessary, perhaps, in the mind of the reader, to justify the confidence with which I offered my system to the British public. It will be remembered what an outcry was caused by my advertisements: but wherefore?—did not others profess to do as I? Many, no doubt, every day. Why, then, were those gentlemen supposed to be acting in the right line of their profession, while I, for saying the same thing, was abused as a quack or impostor? The reason is, that *I alone* appeared to be serious in what I advanced; that *my* advertisements had an air of truth that falsehood never can put on; that I appealed to almost instantaneous facts and personal experience, to the result of a few lessons, as a test of the truth of what I advanced; and that no other man had ever thus come forward. I appeal to the candid reader, whether I could, with a just regard

to truth, have said less than I did at that time; and I appeal, still more boldly, to the public at large, whether I have not since fully and honourably redeemed every pledge I have given.

The result was a success beyond what I had ever before experienced, so that I was obliged to employ seven other teachers with myself. In eighteen months I had above six hundred pupils for the different languages (Greek, Latin, German, French, and Italian); and, among them, many of the first families in the kingdom. I had brought to London above thirty letters of recommendation, but I used none of them—not even those to the American Ambassador. Three months afterwards, I handed three of them to his Secretary, who had become my pupil and my friend, and whose advice, repeatedly and kindly pressed on me, to abstain from angry replication to prejudiced schoolmasters, I heartily wish I had followed. This is, however, but one of the many faults which I doubtless have made, though I have not mentioned them in this history. His Excellency did me the honour to acknowledge my letters by a visit at my house in Cecil-street. One of the faults, and perhaps the greatest, was to quit London at this time: the reasons for this have no connection with this history; it was, however, as mischievous as the leaving my school in Baltimore; for, though I left my establishment in London in the hands of persons capable of effecting all I had ever professed to do, yet others also took up the system who knew it not, and thus was the public imposed on in many instances: this, together with the knowledge that I was no longer in London, did the system much mischief, at a time when, assailed on all sides by other teachers frightened at its success, it needed the support of its veteran defenders. With the like success, as to

the number and respectability of my pupils, I have since taught in Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh, Dublin, Belfast, and at least twenty other places, effecting everywhere the utmost I had ever professed in the first three sections of my course ; that is, by enabling the pupil to read and *analytically* to translate, in the first section, the Gospel of St. John ;—in the second, the Fables of Perrin ;—and, in the third, the Recueil Choisi ;—for all which I had published analytical translations ; but not often going farther. For this many reasons may be assigned ; and as I have often been blamed for it, in my justification I think it necessary to enter into some details relative to the formation and conduct of my classes. It may be of use for the government of other teachers, who may remedy the inconvenience to which the rules I have prescribed to myself (and not the system) have subjected me. I teach adults only ; and as I find it as easy to teach one hundred persons in a class as four or five, my interest, as well as the interest of the pupil, is, that I should form large classes. But to this there are so many obstacles, chiefly from the fear of misassociation,—a thing impossible in my classes, where the members have no more communication than if in church,—that my private classes rarely consist of more than from six to twelve. The members being bound only for ten lessons, or one section, it usually happens that from ill health, business, &c., one or two drop off at the end of the first ; as many at the end of the second ; and so on till the class is too small to attend without loss. The same thing happens in my public classes, when they are taught by sections. When I have engaged to teach the whole course, though all, who attend faithfully, infallibly succeed, yet these are usually the smaller part of the class. Many of the members being in business are

frequently prevented from attending the class, others from reading out of class. If the teacher were not subjected to teach the language in the smallest possible number of lessons, the non-attendance of the pupil for a lesson or ten lessons would be a trifle ; but if, having taught him to read in thirty lessons the French, Italian, or German language, he be restricted to twenty more to enable him to write and speak, and that the pupil omit to attend one-half of them, it is evident that, without any fault in the system, the pupil will not have attained the desired degree of proficiency at the end of the course. Now, as I have hitherto made it a rule not to stop longer than five or six months in any place,—that is to say, longer than is necessary to form classes, and to perfect those who choose to join them at first, and to go through the course,—it follows that all who neglect to take the lessons of the course are without remedy, as well as those who, waiting to see the result of the system in the first and second sections, become members of classes, formed often when I have already spent half the time I intend stopping in any place ; all these persons complain bitterly of my departure, and I leave no place without leaving behind me many of both descriptions. But the Hamiltonian System has nothing to do with this. Its author, wishing to make it known, wishing to see its adoption by other teachers, and much more desirous that others should obtain scholars than himself, is obliged to travel ; but the Hamiltonian Teacher who remains fixed in one place will not have these inconveniences, and will therefore do more to satisfy his pupils than the author of the system, for the reasons above-mentioned, has been able to do. The resident teacher will, in every instance, fulfil the utmost wish of the pupil ; but then the resident teacher must not confine



himself absolutely to a fixed number of lessons for a class. He must permit the member, who has not been able to attend, to obtain extra lessons on paying for them, which the author of the system has never been able to do. A circumstance of which many of his pupils have complained, but which he has been obliged to persist in, from the rule prescribed to himself, never to take more from a pupil than the public subscription to the course or section ; never to afford one pupil an advantage which all did not possess.

But the mischief is by no means so great, in any of these cases, as many pupils suppose. They think that, not having been perfected, what they have got is worth nothing : they have, however, got what no pupil ever got, in any length of time, on the common plan—they can translate with a degree of accuracy, which no teacher, on the common plan, has ever approached ;—they analyse all they read, and thus in effect parse it ;—they have a correct pronunciation ;—they possess, in fact, all that is necessary to perfect themselves, and they have already obtained more than is ever obtained on the common plan. Only let them continue to read, and take the fifth section the first opportunity that presents itself.

In reading over my manuscript, I perceive I have not sufficiently described the two latter sections. I have said at the beginning of the third section I lecture on grammar generally, particularly the verbs, in which the pupil is exercised during the whole of the third section—devoting half of each lesson to this, and the other half to *reading*. By the exercises on the verbs, I mean orally—teaching them to use with facility, affirmatively, negatively, and interrogatively, the regular verbs, and about a dozen others which are of momentary occurrence in conversation ; and this, I think, has not been suffi-

ently attended to, or at least not been continued long enough, in my classes hitherto, from a too great confidence in the attention of the classes to know their verbs perfectly, at a time when they can obtain a perfect knowledge of them with so little trouble. The teacher must trust nothing, absolutely nothing, to the pupil, whether boy or adult.

In three classes which I have now in Manchester, after reading for some days the English Testament into French, I returned to these oral exercises in the use of the verbs ; and the result has been singularly successful. It has restored confidence to several members of these classes, who having never read except in class, were consequently fearful that, according to my repeated predictions, they would not be able to speak, and has induced them to apply again to reading, while, in the mean time, they use with delight, in writing and speaking, the words of which they have already, by these exercises, obtained a perfect command.

Let, I say, these exercises be continued faithfully to the end of the third section, and four or five lessons of the fourth. At the fifth lesson of the fourth section, I begin to translate the English Gospel of St. John into pure French—simple but correct language. One of the pupils repeats the phrase as I have given it, and thus it is repeated four or five times, more or less, until perfectly understood by every member of the class : a second verse is then read in the same manner, diminishing the number of repetitions as the task becomes more easy, until at length, at the third or fourth lesson, it is found that one repetition is sufficient. Of what is thus read in class, four or five verses are written by the pupil out of class, and brought as an exercise, in the correction of which the teacher points out the faults he may

have made, and the mode of avoiding them in future, with the general rules and principles of grammar. It will be usually found, that, at the end of six or eight exercises of this kind, he will make no more faults in grammar. The pupil continues to read the English Testament in the manner above described, until he can read it alone without the assistance of his teacher ; continuing daily to present some exercise in French, as a commercial or friendly letter or anecdote, till his style be free from Anglicisms, which are the last faults which disappear, and which reading alone can perfectly conquer.

To read French at sight with as much facility as English,—to write a friendly or commercial letter correctly and readily,—to speak with correctness, though not at first with fluency,—is the usual degree of facility and knowledge my pupils acquire in this language ; a knowledge, as I have elsewhere remarked, certainly susceptible of extent and accuracy, but much more than has ever yet been communicated in any length of time on the common system ;—indeed, as much as one man can communicate to another, and, certainly, sufficient for any social and commercial purpose ;—and this knowledge the pupil is immediately able to communicate to another, while it is acquired in so short time, with so much certainty, and with so trifling an expense of labour and money, that surely no man or woman, acquainted with the existence of the system, will neglect to profit by it.

The following fact is too important in itself, and too honourable to my system, to be omitted here.—Besides the numerous classes which assembled at my house in Cecil-street, private classes were attended in different parts of the town. One of my partners met a class at the house of Mr. John Smith, M.P. This gentleman was so delighted with the system, that he conceived the idea

of rendering it the national mode of instruction, and of founding a University for the propagation of it? For this purpose, it was judged necessary to authenticate the progress of a class of boys in the Latin language; and, after communicating with me on the subject, he very nobly subscribed one hundred pounds towards the expense of it. Several of his friends also subscribed, so that £225. were collected to defray the expense of the experiment, which was confided to me. I had so little doubt of producing the utmost result that the wildest imagination could suppose possible in human beings, that my sole care was to authenticate their progress. The fear that the public might suppose the success a delusion, deprived me of that judgment and reflection so necessary for its success. I had just given up my establishment in Cecil-street to my son-in-law, Mr. UNDERWOOD; and it was feared that the reception of ten charity boys into the house might injure the establishment. I therefore took a house in Gower-street, by which I incurred a loss of above £300. But the great mistake was, to make the experiment of a foreign language on boys who knew little or nothing of their own:—they were taken from an obscure charity school—from the very lowest grade of human beings;—they knew no language further than the expression of their physical wants or childish pleasures—they could scarcely read their Testament—they had never read any thing else. I know not how I could be blind enough not to see the impossibility of teaching such children (from ten to thirteen years of age) Latin, without first teaching them English; or how Mr. Smith himself, and those gentlemen who assisted at the examination of these boys before the experiment began, and who fully authenticated their almost total destitution of either *words* or ideas in their own language, did not



reflect on the utter impossibility of communicating to them a greater knowledge of Latin than they possessed of English. As they understood the greater part of the words of the Testament, when these words were turned into Latin for them, they could comprehend them also in that language ; but when we got beyond the Testament, to Cornelius Nepos or Cæsar's Commentaries, into a language more elevated, and the expression of ideas to which their previous ignorance rendered them total strangers, it was necessary with the Latin word to teach the pupil also the English word, and, with both, the idea which they represented ;—a task impossible to perform simultaneously to any extent, and the impossibility of which became so evident after they had gone through the Gospel of St. John, the Epitome of the *Historia Sacra*, and the *De Viris Illustribus* of Aurelius Victor, that I made them read English every day, with a hope of extending their knowledge in that language, and thus rendering their acquirement of another to any extent possible. But this consumed the time allowed for the experiment ; and, therefore, in order that it should not wholly fail, I turned their attention to the French and Italian languages, and in two months made them know of these two languages as much, or more, than they knew of Latin : that is, that they could understand an easy author in either ; translate it with perfect grammatical accuracy and a correct pronunciation. So far as their knowledge of English went, so far the system operated on them to its utmost extent, and would, I doubt not, have sufficed for one or two other languages in the same time : but when their English words were exhausted, then arose the insurmountable difficulty of communicating the knowledge of new ones ; and here, let it be said, *en passant*, is another most formidable difficulty, which the present plan

of teaching the Latin opposes to the progress of the pupil in common schools, instead of making him begin by reading a considerable number of easy English authors, such, for example, as those published by the Society for Education in Ireland, and thus giving him a fund of information and ideas, as well as a knowledge of his own language, the boy is put to study the English or Latin grammar, which can communicate to him neither words nor ideas. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that the result is such as we see it every day. But another difficulty attended this ill-fated experiment; a want of harmony arose, I know not how, between the gentlemen who induced me to undertake it and myself:—they saw me not—they imagined they had *paid* for the experiment its full value, while I knew that it occasioned me a loss of above £500. They appeared to consider me as a mere workman in the business. Hurt with a treatment which I then thought, and still think, I did not merit, at the end of six months I left town and the examination of the pupils to the gentlemen who had proposed the experiment. The account given of this examination was as follows:—

*Extract from the Morning Chronicle of Wednesday, November 16th, 1825.*—“*Hamiltonian System.*—We yesterday were present at an examination of eight lads who have been under Mr. Hamilton since some time in the month of May last, with a view to ascertain the efficacy of his system in communicating a knowledge of languages. These eight lads, all of them between the ages of twelve and fourteen, are the children of poor people, who when they were first placed under Mr. Hamilton, possessed no other instruction than common reading and writing. They were obtained from a common country school, through the interposition of a Member of Parliament, who takes an active part in pro-

moting charity schools throughout the country ; and the choice was determined by the consent of the parents, and not by the cleverness of the boys.

“ They had been employed in learning Latin, French, and latterly Italian ; and yesterday they were examined by several distinguished individuals, among whom we recognised John Smith, Esq. M. P. ; G. Smith, Esq. M. P. ; Mr. J. Mill, the historian of British India ; Major Camac ; Major Thompson ; Mr. Cowell, &c. &c. They first read different portions of the Gospel of St. John, in Latin, and of Cæsar’s Commentaries, selected by the visitors. The translation was executed with an ease which it would be in vain to expect in any of the boys who attend our common schools, even in their third or fourth year ; and proved that the principle of exciting the attention of boys to the utmost, during the process by which the meaning of words is fixed in their memory, had given them a great familiarity with so much of the language as is contained in the books above alluded to. Their knowledge of the parts of speech was respectable, but not so remarkable ; as the Hamiltonian System follows the natural mode of acquiring language, and only employs the boys in analysing, when they have already attained a certain familiarity with any language.

“ The same experiments were repeated in French and Italian with the same success ; and, upon the whole, we cannot but think the success has been complete. It is impossible to conceive a more impartial mode of putting any system to the test, than to make such an experiment on the children of our peasantry.”

On this statement the Edinburgh Review thus remarks:

“ Into the truth of this statement we have personally inquired, and it seems to us to have fallen short of the facts, from the laudable fear of over-stating them. The lads selected for the experiment were parish boys of the most

ordinary description, reading English worse than Cumberland curates, and totally ignorant of the rudiments of any other language. They were purposely selected by a gentleman who defrayed its expence, and who had the strongest desire to put strictly to the test the efficacy of the Hamiltonian System. The experiment was begun the middle of May, 1825, and concluded on the 16th day of November, in the same year mentioned in the extract, exactly six months after. The Latin books set before them were the Gospel of St. John, and parts of Cæsar's Commentaries ; some Italian book or books (what we know not), and a selection of French histories. The visitors put the boys on where they pleased, and the translation was (as the reporter says) executed with an ease which it would be in vain to expect in any of the boys who attend our common schools, even in their third or fourth year."

This account, as the writer in the Edinburgh Review justly remarked, was rather under than over the mark. It was a fair and honourable account of it ; though their knowledge of French and Italian was scarcely attended to at the examination, far less their previous ignorance of all language, and their emptiness of all ideas. Had I chosen ten boys from a different class of society, whose ideas had been expanded by conversation, and their knowledge of their own language by reading ; or, if I had made these ten boys begin by a course of two months' reading the books above alluded to, the experiment would have been complete. I have the fullest conviction, that were I to repeat it on proper subjects, or, what is the same thing, begin it by a two months' course of English reading, having at the same time translations such as I have since made, they could have been taken through a course of thirteen volumes, and have been made to know them perfectly. I consider the experiment a failure ;



but no man else has a right to consider it so: it produced, against every obstacle that imagination could offer to its success, a progress manifold greater than had ever been effected on the common plan, in the same length of time, in three languages—a progress in the Latin justly estimated a three years' progress on the common plan; and an accuracy in translating French and Italian, which on the plan of our schools, or in any other manner than by my translations (which were not then made), has never been acquired in any length of time whatever. The University, of which the System gave the first idea, has been reared; but its founders, disdaining the more humble but more useful ambition of rendering the languages an easy acquisition to the youth of this kingdom, have taken a loftier flight, and SUCCEEDED. 'Tis well: but until the primary schools (I mean those called grammar schools) adopt a different mode of teaching the languages than that now in use, or until the Universities take up the languages themselves on a better plan, the best of them will do little towards a greater diffusion of real science than at present exists.

In a work such as this, intended to give a full account of the Hamiltonian System, I ought, perhaps, to mention those who have written for and against it. To mention all the latter, would alone require a pamphlet larger than this: had there, however, been found among them one single man of talent—one candid and able adversary—I would gladly give his arguments here; but I declare, upon my honour, I have never read a single page which, for fact or argument, deserved notice. The late Dr. Jones was, perhaps, the most respectable writer who has attacked the system in Europe; but Dr. Jones had a system of his own, and his system and his attack were equally weak: I judged them both utterly unworthy of notice.

Several able defences have appeared, both here and in America. The best of these is, without doubt, that which drew forth Dr. Jones's attack, from the pen of the Rev. Sidney Smith, and appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* for June, 1826. It is written with great strength of reasoning, as well as humour : the matter was rich, and he has made the most of it. He concludes an essay of twenty-three octavo pages in the following manner : after quoting some of the rules of the Eton and Westminster grammars, he continues,—

“Such are the easy initiations of our present methods of teaching. The Hamiltonian System, on the other hand, 1. teaches an unknown tongue by the closest interlinear translation, instead of leaving a boy to explore his way by the lexicon or dictionary. 2. It postpones the study of grammar till a considerable progress has been acquired. 3. It substitutes the cheerfulness and competition of the Lancasterian system for the dull solitude of the dictionary. By these means a boy finds he is making a progress, and learning something from the very beginning. He is not overwhelmed with the first appearance of insuperable difficulties ; he receives some little pay from the first moment of his apprenticeship, and is not compelled to wait for remuneration till he is out of his time. The student having acquired the great art of understanding the sense of what is written in another tongue, may go into the study of the language as deeply and extensively as he pleases. The old system aims at beginning with a depth and accuracy which many men never will want, which disgusts many from arriving even at moderate attainments, and is a less easy and not more certain road to a profound skill in languages, than if attention to grammar had been deferred to a later period. In fine, we are strongly persuaded, that, the time being given, this system will make better scholars ; and the degree of scholarship being given, a much shorter time will be needed.

If there is any truth in this, it will make Mr. Hamilton one of the most useful men of his age; for if there is any thing which fills reflecting men with melancholy and regret, it is the waste of mortal time, parental money, and puerile happiness, in the present method of pursuing Latin and Greek."

The effect of this critique was to call the attention of the public afresh to a subject which had excited a lively interest for two years, but which was so hotly opposed on the one hand, and so highly applauded on the other, that the public found it difficult to form a judgment. Much good has, therefore, resulted from it; but this good has not been unmixed with evil. The writer, while he defended the barbarisms which appeared in the first edition of my Greek Gospel of St. John, which he judged essential to the system, supposed that they might be remedied by a free translation in addition to the interlineary one. This unlucky idea, founded on his total unacquaintance with the practical part of this mode of teaching, induced a number of persons wholly ignorant of the system—nay, of the very first principles of analysis—to make these double translations; but not making *either* analytical, utterly defeated the object of the system, by obliging the pupil often to recur to his dictionary for the meaning of the word, and to his master for the *ordo*. These books, to render the deception complete, have been sold as mine, and have done much mischief by being confounded with my system, of which they are as distant as the antipodes. I had foreseen this; but fearing that my attack of what was yet only ideal might seem illiberal, I did not allude to it in my answer to the Edinburgh Review, which was as follows:—

"*Hamiltonian System.*—To the Editor of the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*.—Sir, The last Number of the Edinburgh Review contains so able a defence of this system, that, as

its author, I think I cannot with propriety delay the public expression of my gratitude to the eloquent writer of it. In doing this, my intention is not to add any thing to what he has said in commendation of the system, but rather to reply to those criticisms which a spirit of candour and impartiality has induced him to make. I regret that I had not an opportunity of conversing with him; it would have been so easy to prove to his satisfaction, that the few points on which he supposes it deficient or vulnerable, are, in fact, abundantly guarded from the inconveniences he fears. And, first, as to the manner in which this system has been brought before the public, by ADVERTISING; this has been often attacked by my opposers, and sometimes condemned by my friends. My advocate in the Review thinks this circumstance '*unfortunate*;' and I would certainly coincide with him in opinion, for it has cost me above one thousand pounds, provided he or any other person will point out to me any *other* way under Heaven in which I could have brought it forward with the slightest hope of success. Unfortunate, indeed, and painful has it often been to me to pass for one hour for a puffer or boaster; but if a faithful and simple representation of my system, if a fair exposition of its results, appear incredible or impossible, as they are in truth on the common plan, the fault is not in me, but in the general ignorance in society of what a right system of teaching ought to produce. No doubt, if this appearance of puffing could have been avoided, it would be desirable; but the mode of avoiding it, without abandoning my profession, neither friends nor enemies have yet pointed out. Those who think it was only necessary to demonstrate its effects to the heads of colleges or schools, to statesmen, clergymen, editors, or men of learning generally, in order to have my system ushered to the notice of mankind, with all the honours which attended inoculation or the vaccine, know



little of the world, or of the classes of men they speak of ; they know not the prejudices of education, the force of mental habits, of preconceived opinions, of private interests, or scholastic pride. If I had not advertised, I should never have had a pupil ; and if I had not in my advertisements told the infallible result of my lessons, instead of being able to count ten thousand pupils formed in ten years, I should probably find myself with thirty or forty children in some obscure village of the United States. They are, besides, widely mistaken, who suppose a system of teaching can be formed in one day, and proposed to society in a perfect state the next : practice, publicity, experience, opposition, rivalry, jealousy, discussion, are necessary, absolutely necessary, to perfect it, and of those the Hamiltonian System has had its full share. When I entered my scholastic career, I had one single principle of what has since, by the re-union of other principles, become a system. I TAUGHT, instead of *ordering to learn* ; and by the application of this one mighty lever, which had lain rusty for centuries, I effected wonders, ' I raised a world.' This is yet, and ever will be, the basis of the Hamiltonian System ; analytical translation, repetition, and the other principles which now compose it, being but the handmaids of this one mighty but universally neglected principle. By the use of this one principle, I say, I effected a progress, believed, and truly believed, impossible on the usual plan, and I published this progress ; but, in doing so, I said the truth only ; I appealed continually to facts ; I gave not the names of my patrons, but the names of my pupils, and at every step invited inquiry, and defied investigation. Is this, I ask, puffing or quackery ? If it be, tell me what truth and simplicity are, for I know them not. But there is another and very simple argument for advertising, which is not always taken into account by my friends, when they affect to condemn it as unworthy the

author of an useful discovery ;—I had to live by it : it has afforded me and my family an honourable support for the last ten years ; and I would ask, are there any other terms on which society could justly require of me to devote my life to the purpose of diffusing the knowledge and the benefits of it ?

“The second objection made by the eloquent advocate of my system is, that emulation is discarded from it ; ‘there is,’ he says, ‘no change of seats.’ This would be below the dignity of the rank and age of my pupils generally, and with boys the loss of time would be enormous ; besides, that it has been found unnecessary, the delight and surprise of the pupil at the perception of his progress at every step, produces all the effects of emulation or jealousy in other systems. I have known parents, nay, grandfathers and grandmothers, enter my classes, expressly stipulating not to be called on to recite, before the end of three lessons, become the most lively members of the class, and the most zealous co-operators in its exercises.

The third objection is, that I ascribe to one word one meaning only. This is a vital principle, absolutely necessary in all analytical translation. I do not contend for it as a theoretic invaluable truth, but as an operative and practical principle. I know it has many exceptions, though infinitely fewer than is generally supposed, but the principle itself must never be lost sight of ; it would instantly re-plunge the unhappy pupil into the chaotic confusion and uncertainties of dictionaries, from which it is the object of the Hamiltonian system to rescue him. *Jubeo* and *dolor*, which the Reviewer quotes as a proof that words may have two meanings, do not form exceptions to this principle : to command or to order are not *two* meanings, but *one*. *Grief* and *sorrow* the same ; but if he will look into Ainsworth, he will find for *jubeo* and *dolor* a number of other forced,

figurative, or implied meanings for each of these words, which, on the principles of my translations, must be utterly rejected.

“The fourth objection, ‘I guarantee the progress of my pupils.’ This objection has been made for want of accurate information relative to the nature of it. The Reviewer, ‘from experiments and observations which have fallen under his own notice,’ ASSERTS, that a boy of common capacity, and studying four hours a-day, might, on this System, be taught the four Gospels in Greek in six weeks; in Italian or French in three; in German in five. His conviction of this is full and perfect; why then not GUARANTEE it to the timid or cautious father, who pays for this acquirement in advance, or to the modest pupil who fears such a progress to be beyond his power.—But what if he does not attend? What if he be sick, or idle, or stupid? Here is precisely the use of the guarantee—give him his lessons over again: this is all I mean.

“The triumph of the Hamiltonian system is, that, with the utmost moral certainty, you can predict the day, nay, the very hour, when a pupil, utterly ignorant of a language, shall be able to translate any given easy book in it with a correctness of pronunciation, and an accuracy of translation and grammatical analysis, which an adept in language may equal but not surpass; and that this day or hour may not be at the distance of one year, as would be usually required on the common plan, but, with the slightest exertion on the part of the pupil and teacher, at the end of one month! and that such is the certainty with which the teacher undertakes the task, that he is willing to stake all he possesses, his reputation, on the result; that, in short, he can GUARANTEE.—I am, with respect, Sir, Your most obedient Servant,

“JAMES HAMILTON.”

“*Edinburgh, 15th Aug. 1826.*”

Such is the History of the Hamiltonian System, which I have brought down to the moment of delivering the following Lecture in Liverpool. As it may tend to elucidate some points in education which I have not before treated on, I give it nearly in the words in which I delivered it to one of the smallest audiences I have ever addressed. It was, however, delivered in the same room in which I had twice before addressed an audience of 1600 persons; but I had, unluckily, appointed my lecture at the same hour when the result of the Catholic Bill was expected every moment, and the whole town was collected in groups to hear the speech of Mr. Peel on this *all-absorbing question*.

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## LECTURE.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The opinion that the science of Education has much improved within the last thirty years is so general, that it will be thought little less than heresy to deny it. It is certainly true that an infinitely greater number of persons, in proportion to our population, know how to read and write at present than before the introduction of the Lancasterian System and Sunday Schools. This is, so far, a good and happy result; but this does not prove that education as a science, that is, the mode of imparting knowledge, more especially that of the Languages, has advanced one step, or that the higher classes are, in this respect, better educated now than they were a century ago.

There are in this town, as well as in every other of the



United Kingdom, thousands of persons who bewail their own want of literary instruction, which they modestly, but erroneously, attribute to their inattention and idleness while at school; and who sincerely imagine they are taking the necessary steps to obviate so great a misfortune to their offspring, by sending them to the schools where the nobility send theirs, in the fond hope that their children will make a better improvement of their time and opportunity than they themselves have done. But the cause being the same, the result turns out invariably the same. The sons, as the fathers, having sacrificed real and useful knowledge to the vain and futile advantage of studying Greek and Latin with Lord A. and Marquis B., return to the paternal mansion almost as empty of either as when they left it. The Languages of Greece and Rome are, doubtless, well worth a reasonable time spent in the successful study of them; but no man in his senses will say that it is a rational act of the parent to make his son study these languages seven or eight years, with the almost absolute certainty that even in that time he will not have obtained such a knowledge of them as to render the literature of these ancient nations familiar to him: or that even if he did, if he learn nothing else, that that literature alone would suffice to make him a man of Education, a sound scholar of the present day. This is not educating his son, but rather insuring, as far as in him lies, his ignorance and consequent degradation; for though the knowledge of Greek and Latin does not tend to degradation, *per se*, of itself, yet does it lead infallibly to this result; for if eight years are given up to this study, and given up exclusively to it, as is usually the case, our own language, containing information infinitely more precious, more important, History, Geography, Astronomy, Natural

History, and Natural Philosophy ; the literature of our own and other nations ; the knowledge of the productions of our own country and of others ; the commercial, political, and scientific relations of the different nations of the earth with each other ; their manners, habits, commerce, customs, religion, and laws, exclusive of the liberal sciences, and that fund of indirect information which can be acquired by reading, and reading alone, must be sacrificed to it ; and yet all these are absolutely necessary to constitute a right education, and are in themselves a far more essential part of it than Greek and Latin.

As far, therefore, as ignorance can degrade, the unhappy student is degraded by such a course, and remains for ever degraded, unless at this period of life, that is, on his quitting school, he betake himself to the study of those objects to which I have above alluded, with tenfold more ardour than he has ever studied Greek and Latin ; a task of uncommon difficulty in itself, and rendered still more difficult by a distaste for learning too frequently contracted at school, and by the necessity in which he now finds himself, to apply his time and talents to some professional pursuit, on his success in which is to depend his ease, affluence, and respectability, his very existence in after life ; and if I grant that many have conquered all these difficulties, and have risen to eminence, respect, and riches, it must, I think, be conceded to me, on the other hand, that thousands in the different professions of Divinity, Law, and Physic, victims of the system of Education I have here signalized, however ardent their endeavours, have been unable to raise themselves to respect or real usefulness, nor would be able to procure a subsistence by their profession, if they were not assisted by relatives and friends, and often placed

in positions which render them, in a great measure, independent of those for whom they officiate.

Still, it must be granted that the Greek and Latin languages are so wound up in all our institutions, professions, sciences, literature, language,—nay, in our very religion, customs, conversation, amusements and social habits,—that no man will be hardy enough to deny their overwhelming importance; and the parent who feels this importance, without being sufficiently aware of the still greater importance of the other species of knowledge to which I have alluded, and not knowing how to attain both, consents, however reluctantly, to suffer his son to tread the same barren rugged road he had himself trodden; and thus has the work of Education been carried on, by prescription, for the last two centuries. But how does the study of Greek and Latin cause all this mischief? By the most simple process that can be conceived: by taking up all the time of the student, and consequently preventing him from **READING**!—**READING**, whose effects mankind seem to be utterly unaware of;—**READING**, the only real—the only effectual source of instruction;—**READING**, the pure spring of nine-tenths of our intellectual enjoyments,—the only cure for all our ignorances;—**READING**, without which no man ever yet possessed extensive information;—**READING**, which alone constitutes the difference between the blockhead and the man of learning;—**READING**, the loss of which no knowledge of Greek particles, nor the most intimate acquaintance with the rules of syntax and prosody, will ever be able to compensate;—**READING**, the most valuable gift of the Divinity, has been sacrificed to the acquirement of what never constituted real learning, and which constitutes it now less than ever; and to the contemptible vanity of being supposed a classical scholar, often without the shadow of a

title to it. That this picture is not charged, I would appeal to the experience of almost every man capable of understanding me,—to every man whose position in society has given him an opportunity of knowing those who compose it: I would appeal to the minister of the Gospel, the physician, the lawyer, the gentleman. I would entreat every parent to inquire into its truth, before it be too late to prevent its baneful effects upon his offspring.

READING is, then, of ten thousand-fold the importance of any other science, because it is the mother of them all; and as it must not be sacrificed to Greek or Latin, so neither should it be sacrificed to any thing else. Nothing can, in any case, be substituted for it: it is the milk of the intellectual child; it is the solid nourishment of the grown man; it is the wine of old age. It must not, therefore, be sacrificed in childhood to *spelling*, to endeavouring to recite, to speak, or to read with *propriety*; because, to read with propriety before we have acquired a considerable fund of knowledge and experience of life, is impossible and useless. Neither should it be sacrificed to grammar or composition, nor to getting by heart any thing whatever, because these are utterly unattainable before we have read a great deal; nor to *writing*, for years, *large hand*, in order to be able to write *small*; to arithmetic, at an age when it is wholly useless; nor to the thousand other contrivances which it would seem that the enemy of mankind could alone have put into the heads of school-masters, to prevent the child from READING, that is, from learning any thing, and thus keep him, like another Sisyphus, the whole time of his scholastic life, rolling up the stone of science all the day, to see it roll down every night, and then be obliged every morning to renew the disgusting task.

As reading is the source of all real instruction, as is



self-evident to any man who reflects on the subject ; so it is also the sole—the only means by which the *words of a dead language* can be acquired. It is inconceivable that those persons, whose business is the instruction of others in the languages, should not have found out this obvious truth, that to speak or write a language, *we must know it by heart* ; and that so far as we know it in this manner, so far reaches the copiousness, harmony, and variety of our style in speaking or in writing, and no farther !

The man who has not learned to read, knows only those words which he has learned in conversation ; his vocabulary is smaller than can well be imagined, still however, proportioned and analogous to the company he has kept. But to write and speak with any pretensions to purity, or elegance, or variety of style, we must have read—read a great deal, and good authors. The first book a man reads impresses on his mind and memory a number of words he either knew not before, or knew so imperfectly that he did not dare to use them ; every succeeding book augments this number, and with it forms gradually his judgment as to their fitness, singly or collectively. No man has ever yet become a critic with regard to language—no man has ever written or spoken with elegance and propriety, by any other means.

Now if this be correct with regard to our own language, how much more demonstrably correct is it with regard to a foreign idiom, in which we derive no assistance from conversation ? Here reading must do the whole ; and here precisely it is that we are prevented from reading by our masters, and directed to obtain a knowledge of the language by grammatical rules, by philological criticisms, in the study of which we remain occupied till we have no longer time to study at all ; till



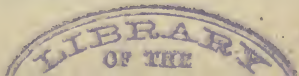
we are called to take an active part in the duties of life. I am conscious that I shall be thought verbose and diffuse on this subject: "It is ridiculous," exclaims the critic, "to tell us so much of the utility of READING; we all feel and know it." I beg your pardon, sir, not one in a thousand of those for whom I write, know or feel that the words of a language are to be got by reading only: if they did, they would practise it for themselves and prescribe it to others, instead of giving them a dictionary for that purpose.

Still, I have admitted the absolute necessity of acquiring the Greek and Latin languages, and the Greek and Latin languages are the cause of all the evil: how are we to get over this difficulty? how remedy the evil without putting away the cause? for, if we study them as we have hitherto done, there is no time for reading—what, then, is to be done? **STUDY THEM ON A DIFFERENT PLAN**, if such a plan exists; and if it does not, seek and find one. **BUT IT DOES EXIST**: its existence is demonstrated by evidence as clear as light; it can be denied by none; it can be doubted only by the man who has never inquired. Yes, the Latin and Greek languages, instead of occupying eight or ten years' disgusting labour, may be acquired without difficulty, nay, with interest and delight, and with them a fund of that information which I have above signalized as more valuable than they, from the reading of the authors in *every branch* of literature found in these languages,—all may, I say, be acquired with infallible certainty in eighteen months or two years; and will thus, instead of being a hinderance to real and useful information, constitute in themselves the most important and useful portion of it. The knowledge of them, instead of being confined to the Fellows of Colleges, will be found, where they ought to be found, in the study of the Lawyer, the Physician, and the Apo-

thecary, in the counting-house of the Merchant, in the parlour of every private Gentleman ; every man of Education will possess them really, instead of possessing, as is now usually the case, the unmerited reputation of knowing them.

I shall now enter into the details of the easy and pleasing system I propose : in doing this, it will not be required of me that I should enter into the proof of every fact I advance. The Hamiltonian System has been now before the public for many years ; its Author has not been content with explaining it in every city of the United Kingdom, but has taught many thousands of pupils, and proclaimed their progress to the world ; every where inviting the investigation of its friends, and defying the scrutiny of its enemies ; every where appealing to the testimony of his pupils, whose patronage alone he has ever sought or obtained. His books have now an extensive circulation. They are known on the Continent of Europe under the name of "Système Naturel ;" they are used in Calcutta, the United States, and the West Indies ; and they have been counterfeited in England by numbers, who imagined they were writing on the Hamiltonian System, when they were only taking the pupil back to the justly-scouted translations of Locke, of Clarke, of Stirling, and, in our own days, of the followers of Dumarsais ; who, not perceiving the difference between *interlinear* and *analytical* translations, have given false and incorrect translations interlineally. They have, at least, rendered homage to the merits of that system which they attempted thus to appropriate to themselves. But I come to my exposition, and ask pardon for this long introduction.

It has been supposed that there are in the Greek and Latin, if not in all other languages, certain fixed stamina,



certain fundamental rules or principles, the preliminary knowledge of which is absolutely necessary to the acquirement of the language itself. These soi-disant fundamental rules and principles are collected into what is called a Grammar (a book, I believe, utterly unknown to the Greeks and Romans), and put into the hands of every student (not, indeed, to study or to comprehend, that would be impossible), but to *get by heart*, before he is permitted to translate; at first sight, it appears the most inconceivable folly, to study the rules by which the words of a language are connected, with their derivation and declension, before we know their meaning. But the object of getting the Grammar by heart is not, as is usually supposed, to give the student a critical, a grammatical knowledge of the language; such an idea, at the outset of his labours, would be altogether preposterous, but it is—TO ENABLE HIM TO LOOK FOR HIS WORDS IN THE DICTIONARY! Thus, if the boy were put to translate the words *da mihi panem*, without this preliminary knowledge, as the Dictionary only contains the root of each of these words, *do*, *ego* and *panis*, he would not be able to find them. He must first know how to conjugate the verb, *do*, that is, to use it in all its moods, tenses, and persons, and to decline the pronoun *ego*, and the noun *panis*, that is, to use them in all their cases, before he can *look for* their meaning.

He has thus really to learn the language twice—first, etymologically, in order to be able to use his Dictionary; and, secondly, by the help of his Dictionary, to learn the meaning of words. The first is a Herculean labour, and such as assuredly no ancient Greek or Roman ever attempted. The latter is rendered inconceivably tedious and difficult, by the use he is obliged to make of this Dictionary, in which a number (often from ten to

thirty) of implied, forced, or figurative meanings are mixed up with the one true and literal meaning of the word, among which the inexperienced student is ordered to find or guess at the right; to this, add the difficulty of the *ordo* of this foreign idiom, the necessity imposed on him of parsing every word, that is, shewing its accordance with rules, and exceptions to rules, of which neither Homer nor Virgil ever heard, and that seem invented only to vex and torment, and prevent the progress of the unhappy pupil.

I wish not to hurt the feelings of any man, much less to satirize one of the most useful and respectable professions in society, in thus describing the process of acquiring these languages. The heads of schools know this account to be exact, and every man who has learned, or at least *studied*, these languages, knows it to be exact. But the present teachers are not the authors of the present system of the school: they teach as thousands of the best and wisest of mankind have taught before them, and as they were taught themselves: many have already adopted, in whole or in part, the Hamiltonian System, and many are yet unacquainted with it. Let us wait to condemn till they refuse to adopt a better mode, fairly demonstrated to be truly such. Meantime, I appeal to their testimony, that the pupil is occupied many months, and sometimes years, not in studying, but in *learning* to study; in acquiring, not the words of the language, but the power of acquiring them. And when, at length, he has acquired that power, the mode in which he is obliged to use it is arduous in the extreme; and if we add to this the idea of coercion, the non-perception of his progress, and the disgust arising from such an apparently useless and endless labour, we ought not to be surprised that so many years are thus spent



in the acquirement of a very imperfect knowledge of six or seven authors; and that it then rarely happens that the pupil would be able to read with pleasure, or to understand without considerable labour and the help of a dictionary, an author which he had not thus previously fagged over for many months. The above is the chief hinderance to the success of our Education. See the easy and effectual process by which it is obviated.

Give the pupil, instead of a Grammar and Dictionary on the common plan, a *Dictionary for every Book* he reads, comprehending not simply the *roots* of the words, but every word; let such a Dictionary point out the mood, tense, and person of every verb, the case of every noun, furnish a perfect analysis of the phrase and of every word in it, so that the pupil shall not only be able to translate his book with infallible certainty in the tenth part of the time hitherto requisite, but be able, at the same time, to *parse* it, that is, to have a perfect knowledge of its Grammar also. Now this Dictionary is precisely a *Hamiltonian Translation*!—take the following examples.

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### ST. MATTHEW, Chapter viii.

5. Εἰσελθόντι δὲ αὐτῷ εἰς Καπερναοὺμ, προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ ἑκατόνταρχος παρακαλὼν αὐτόν,

6. Καὶ λέγων· Κύριε, ὁ παῖς μου βέβληται ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ παραλυτικὸς, δεινῶς βασανιζόμενος.

7. Καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Ἐγὼ ἐλθὼν θεραπεύσω αὐτόν.

5. Δὲ αὐτῷ εἰσελθόντι (2. aor.) εἰς Καπερναοὺμ,

5. And to him having entered into Capernaum,

ἑκατόνταρχος προσῆλθεν (2. a.) αὐτῷ, παρακαλῶν αὐτόν,  
a centurion came to to him, praying him,



6. Καὶ λέγων· Κύριε, ὁ παῖς μου βέβηται  
 6. And saying, O Lord, the child of me has been cast  
 ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ παραλυτικός, δεινῶς βασανιζόμενος.  
 in the house paralytic, dreadfully tormented.
7. Καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτῷ· Ἐγὼ ἐλθὼν (2. α.)  
 7. And the Jesus says to him, I having come  
 θεραπεύσω αὐτόν.  
 will heal him.

## FABLE XI. of ÆSOP.

### JACTATOR.

VIR quidam peregrinatus, deinde in suam patriam reversus, aliæque multa in diversis viriliter gessisse locis jactabat, atque etiam Rhodi saltasse saltum, quem nullus ejus loci potuerit saltare; ad hoc et testes, qui ibi interfuerunt, dicebat se habere. Quidam autem ex iis, qui adërant, respondens ait; Heus tu, si verum hoc est, non est tibi opus testibus: En Rhodus; en et saltus.

### AFFABULATIO.

Fabula significat, nisi prompta rei demonstratio sit, omnem sermonem supervacuum esse.

### JACTATOR.

#### *The Boaster.*

QUIDAM	vir	peregrinatus,	deinde
<i>A certain</i>	<i>man</i>	<i>having travelled-abroad,</i>	<i>afterwards</i>
reversus	in	suam patriam,	jactabat que
<i>having returned</i>	<i>into</i>	<i>his own country,</i>	<i>did boast both</i>
gessisse	multa	alia	viriliter in
<i>to have performed</i>	<i>many</i>	<i>other (things)</i>	<i>manfully in</i>
diversis locis,	atque etiam	saltasse	(saltavisse)
<i>different places,</i>	<i>and also</i>	<i>to have leaped</i>	

saltum Rhodi, quem nullus ejus loci  
*a leap of (at) Rhodes, which no-one of that place*  
 potuerit saltare ; et dicebat se  
*may have been able to leap ; and he did say himself*  
 habere testes ad hoc, qui interfuerunt  
*to have witnesses to this, (those) who were present*  
 ibi. Autem quidam ex iis qui adērant  
*there. But some-one out of those who were present*  
 respondens ait, Heus ! tu, si hoc est verum,  
*answering says, Ho ! thou, if this is true,*  
 est non opus tibi testibus : en  
*(there) is not need to thee with witnesses : behold*  
 Rhodus : en et saltus.  
*Rhodes : behold and (also) the leap.*

## APPLICATION.

Fabŭla significat, nisi prompta demonstratio  
*The Fable signifies, unless a ready demonstration*  
 rei sit, omnem sermonem esse supervacuum.  
*of a thing may be, every speech to be superfluous.*

## ROBINSON CRUSOE IN GERMAN.

Es war einmahl eine zahlreiche Familie, die aus kleinen und grossen Leuten bestand. Diese waren theils durch die Bande der Natur, theils durch wechselseitige Liebe genau vereinigt. Der Hausvater and die Hausmutter liebten Alle, wie ihre eigenen Kinder, ungeachtet nur Lotte, die kleinste von Allen, ihre leibliche Tochter war ; und zwei Freunde des Hauses, R— und B—, thaten dasselbe. Ihr Aufenthalt war auf dem Lande, nahe vor den Thoren von Hamburg.

Es war einmahl eine zahlreiche Familie,  
*There was once a numerous family,*  
 die bestand aus kleinen und grossen Leuten.  
*which consisted out of little and great people.*  
 Diese waren genau vereinigt, theils durch die  
*These were closely united, partly through the*  
 Bande der Natur, theils durch wechselseitige  
*bands of the nature, partly through mutual*  
 Liebe. Der Hausvater und die Hausmutter liebten  
*love. The housefather and the housemother loved*  
 alle, wie ihre eigenen Kinder, ungeachtet nur  
*all, as their own children, although only*  
 Lotte, die kleinste von Allen war ihre leibliche  
*Charlotte, the least of all was their bodily*  
 Tochter, und zwei Freunde des Hauses, R— und  
*daughter, and two friends of the house, R— and*  
 B—, thaten dasselbe. Ihr Aufenthalt war auf  
*B—, did the same. Their residence was upon*  
 dem Lande, nahe vor den Thoren von  
*to the country, near before to the gates of*  
 Hamburg.  
*Hamburg.*

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## FAVOLA XXII.

### IL PESCATORE ED IL PICCOLO PESCE.

UN Pescatore avendo preso in mare un picciolo pesce, esso lo voleva persuadere che gli desse libertà, dicendo : Io sono or sì piccolo ch' io ti farò poco prò ; ma se tu mi lasci andare, io crescerò, e tu mi prenderai poi quando io sarò grande, e così di me avrai maggior frutto. A cui il pescatore disse : io sarei ben pazzo, se quel guadagno ch' io ho presentemente nelle mani, avvegna che sia piccolo, io il lasciassi per isperanza di guadagno futuro, ancor che fosse grande.

## IL PESCATORE ED IL PICCOLO PESCE.

*The Fisher and the little Fish.*

UN Pescatore avendo preso in mare un picciolo pesce,  
*A Fisher having taken in sea a little fish,*

esso voleva persuadere lo che desse  
*he did will to persuade him that he might give*

gli libertà, dicendo ; Io sono ora sì piccolo che io  
*to him liberty, saying ; I am now so little that I*

farò ti poco prò ; ma se tu lasci mi  
*shall do to thee little profit ; but if thou lettest me*

andare, io crescerò, e tu prenderai mi poi  
*to go, I shall increase, and thou will take me then*

quando io sarò grande, e così avrai  
*when I shall be big, and thus thou wilt have*

maggiore frutto di me. A cui il pescatore disse ;  
*greater fruit of me. To whom the fisher said ;*

io sarei ben-pazzo, se quel guadagno che  
*I should be very-foolish, if that gain which*

io ho presentemente nelle mani, avvegna-che  
*I have at-present in the hands, although*

sia piccolo, io lasciassi il per speranza di  
*it may be little, I might leave it for hope of*

futuro guadagno, ancora-che fosse grande.  
*future gain, although it might be great.*



## PERRIN'S FABLES.—FABLE LXXXI.

## LE CHAMPIGNON ET LE GLAND.

UN gland, tombé d'un chêne, vit à ses côtés un champignon. Faquin, lui dit-il, quelle est ta hardiesse d'approcher si près de tes supérieurs ? Race de fumier ! comment oses-tu lever la tête dans une place ennoblie par mes ancêtres depuis tant de générations ? Ne sais-tu pas qui je suis ?

Illustre seigneur, dit le champignon, je vous connais parfaitement bien, et vos ancêtres aussi : je ne prétends pas vous disputer l'honneur de votre naissance, ni la comparer avec la mienne ; au contraire, j'avoue que je sais à peine d'où je suis venu ; mais j'ai des qualités que vous n'avez pas ; je flatte le palais des hommes, et je donne un fumet délicieux aux viandes les plus exquises et les plus délicates : au lieu que vous, avec tout l'orgueil de vos ancêtres et de votre extraction, vous n'êtes propre qu'à engraisser des cochons.

## APPLICATION.

On a souvent reproché à l'auteur du système Hamiltonien son défaut de titres—il n'est ni révérend, ni docteur, ni professeur ! il n'est rien !—d'accord — mais ses traductions sont bonnes—servons-nous en.

LE CHAMPIGNON ET LE GLAND.  
*The Mushroom and the Acorn.*

UN gland, tombé d'un chêne, vit à ses côtés  
*An acorn, fallen from an oak, saw to his sides*  
 un champignon. Faquin, dit-il lui, quelle est ta  
*a mushroom. Scoundrel, said he to him, what is thy*  
 hardiesse d'approcher si près de tes supérieurs ?  
*boldness of to approach so near of thy superiors ?*  
 Race de fumier ! comment oses-tu lever la tête  
*Race of dunghill ! how darest thou to raise the head*  
 dans une place ennoblie par mes ancêtres depuis  
*in a place ennobled by my ancestors since*  
 tant de générations ? Sais-tu qui je suis ?  
*so many of generations ? Knowest thou who I am ?*  
 Illustre seigneur, dit le champignon, je connais  
*Illustrious lord, said the mushroom, I know*  
 vous parfaitement bien, et vos ancêtres aussi : je  
*you perfectly well, and your ancestors also : I*



prétends ne-pas disputer vous l' honneur de votre  
*pretend not to dispute to you the honour of your*  
 naissance, ni comparer la avec la mienne; au  
*birth, nor to compare it with the mine; to the*  
 contraire, j' avoue que je sais à-peine d'où je  
*contrary, I confess that I know scarcely whence I*  
 suis venu; mais j' ai des qualités que vous avez  
*am come; but I have of the qualities that you have*  
 n'pas; je flatte le palais des hommes, et je donne  
*not; I flatter the palate of the men, and I give*  
 un délicieux fumet aux viandes les plus exquisés  
*a delicious flavour to the meats the most exquisite*  
 et les plus délicates, au lieu que vous, avec  
*and the most delicate, to the place that you, with*  
 tout l' orgueil de vos ancêtres et de votre  
*all the pride of your ancestors and of your*  
 extraction, vous êtes propre ne-qu' à engraisser des  
*extraction, you are proper but to fatten of the*  
 cochons.  
*hogs.*

## APPLICATION.

On a souvent reproché à l' auteur du  
*One has often reproached to the author of the*  
 Hamiltonien Système son défaut de titres—il est n'  
*Hamiltonian System his want of titles—he is not*  
 ni révérend, ni docteur, ni professeur—il est n'rien!  
*nor reverend, nor doctor, nor professor—he is nothing!*  
 d'accord! mais ses traductions sont bonnes. Servons  
*agreed! but his translations are good. Let us serve*  
 nous en.  
*ourselves of them.*

Now, as far as translation goes, I would ask what can  
 the student possibly wish for more than he has here—the  
 precise (not implied, not forced, not figurative) meaning

of each word, so that he shall know that meaning wherever he may hereafter meet it, and however connected ; the *ordo*, or order, pointing out the grammatical analysis of the phrase ; the case of every noun and adjective ; the mood, tense, and person of every verb, by appropriate and unchanging signs ? I repeat my question : as far as perfect translation goes, what more can be required or wished for than is here given ? The experience of twelve years, and as many thousand pupils, enables me to reply triumphantly, “Nothing.” But for the Latin, the Gospel of St. John, the *Epitome Historiæ Sacræ*, the Fables of Æsop, Eutropius, Aurelius Victor, Phædrus, each perfect with analytical translations, at four shillings each ; Cornelius Nepos, six shillings and sixpence ; Commentaries of Cæsar, seven shillings and sixpence ; *Selectæ Profanis*, 2 vols. ten shillings ; Sallust, seven shillings and sixpence ; the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, seven shillings and sixpence ; and six books of Virgil, are already published, and some of them have passed through several editions ; in all thirteen volumes, a greater number than are ever read (even in part) in schools. But, it will be asked, Are not several of these authors nearly of the same facility, and may not some of them be omitted without loss ? Those who make this inquiry have forgotten all I have said of the necessity of reading : every one of them should be read ; and I would have published still more of them, did I not know that the student who has a perfect knowledge of these thirteen volumes will be able to read, with facility and pleasure—Cicero, Seneca, Horace, Terence, Livy, or any other classical author ; but I would not answer for his being able to do so before he shall have read them all. All the above authors have the penultima marked when it is short ; when it is not marked, it is long ; and thus,

by this easy contrivance, the practical, and consequently useful, part of prosody, is acquired, without costing the pupil a moment's study, and without fear of his making a false quantity in reading. Each of these volumes can (with delight and interest) be acquired by the pupil in four or five weeks, and even sooner, if it be thought necessary that he should devote his whole time to this study. In fifteen months he will be able to take up any one of them and read it with ease and pleasure, and a perfect intelligence of every word. And to accomplish this unspeakably happy revolution, no effort is required on the part of the teacher; the constitution of his school remains the same; he has no more trouble, nay, infinitely less, than he had before. He prescribes a task as before, but a pleasing and an intelligible one; the pupil acquires it with facility, not a dozen or twenty lines merely, but from five to ten pages. The master is now no longer dreaded, and treated as an enemy; he is loved and cherished as a friend. Here is no need of coercion; what is so easy to be acquired, is acquired by the pupil from the desire to fulfil his duty, or at least to avoid being thought stupid or idle by his fellows. This will leave him time for every other useful and pleasing study; especially READING in his own language, or in some other modern language, the French, Italian, or German, for which books are prepared on the same plan, and which the pupil may learn to read in a few months with as much pleasure as English. Here then is the plan which conciliates and renders rational the study of Latin and Greek, because on this plan alone is the success certain, and the time devoted to it not extravagant.

But there are two objections to this improvement: first, this mode will not teach him *grammar*! Those who make this objection cannot see the wood for trees! to analyze

a phrase word for word, to translate it by corresponding parts of speech, and to point out the grammatical construction of the phrase—the mutual dependance of all the words of a sentence on each other, is not this the very essence of grammar? Could Horace or Virgil do more? Ay, but the rules? Horace and Virgil knew none of these rules. But the examiners at the University do, and insist on the knowledge of them, though they do not insist on an extensive knowledge of the meaning of words. I am sorry for it; but let us see if we cannot satisfy them: when the pupil has read with that degree of accuracy which constitutes the very essence of the Hamiltonian System, the thirteen volumes above-mentioned, or even half of them, give him an Eton Grammar, let him read it over with attention; give him Clarke's Introduction to the making of Latin; let him read the rules in both with attention, and let his master prescribe the study which may be necessary for him to satisfy his superiors; a few days will abundantly suffice for the purpose. I would, however, guard him against the positive errors of both—the futility of several of Clarke's rules, the extreme complexity of others. I would caution him against the signs of the tenses given in the Eton Grammar, of which scarcely *one* is right. Take an example of one *grossly wrong*: the sign of the potential mood is *may* or *can*; now I defy the most learned friend of this establishment to form a single phrase in English in which the word *can* is the sign of a time. But all this is straying from my subject: I meant to shew that when the boy can read and understand a Latin author with facility, the master will be at liberty to make him as profound a grammarian as the author of the *Hermes*, if he please, and that without the expence of more than one week.



The second objection is, the translation is in bad English, following the idiom of the Latin language, and not that of his own ; the pupil will therefore contract the habit of speaking bad English : an objection as rational as the former. To speak or write good English, we must converse with those, whether living or dead, who speak or write it well: if we do this (and we must do it in order to have any just pretensions to a liberal education), there is no fear that, in common discourse or writing, we shall substitute the barbarisms of a foreign idiom for that purity of diction and style which is acquired by reading the classical authors of our own country. There has hitherto been no instance of such an anomaly, and never will while the world lasts.

But there is one more objection, and though last, not, perhaps, the least important: will not the introduction of this system destroy our schools ? If fifteen months suffice for the Latin, how can the teacher count, as at present, on keeping the pupil four or five years ? The time for the reception of instruction, as marked out by nature, cannot be changed by any change in the mode of communicating that instruction ; the difference will be, that the student will quit his school an accomplished scholar and a well-informed gentleman ; and that the *certainty* of arriving at this desired point (a certainty which never before existed) will induce thousands to give their children a classical education (because it will be as cheap as any other), who on the present system would never have thought of it ; so that the adoption of this system will fill the schools instead of emptying them ; will double the number of pupils instead of lessening it.

The opposition this system has every where met with from school-masters, so singularly contrasted with its enthusiastic reception from all those who have had an



opportunity of witnessing its effects, can only arise either from the fears to which I have above alluded, that its introduction would prove injurious to their schools, or from the idea that its advantages are really chimerical—that I really do not teach Grammar; that Grammar is inconsistent with the System. To this I think I have already given a sufficient answer. But though experience and reflection have taught me thus to judge of Grammar, I do not pretend that other men should see with my eyes. I think that the theory of Grammar should be taught only when the pupil can read the language, and understand at least an easy book in it. Thousands more learned than I, think it should precede the study of the language. Well, let those who are of the former opinion teach as I do, and those who are of the latter, make the boy study his Grammar three or six months. But after this suffer him to use a translation, not such as has often been scouted from our schools, but a grammatical, an analytical translation; the loss then will only be the first six months, if even that, and the remaining progress of the pupil such as I have here described it; it will be such as to be practically and really useful to the boy, fulfilling really the designs of the parent.

Before I conclude this lecture, let me entreat the School-master to reflect whether it may not be his interest to adopt the mode of tuition here proposed to him voluntarily, rather than have it forced on him by the unanimous voice of society—for indubitably one of these things must be the necessary and immediate result of the impulse now given to Education throughout the civilized world. Mankind are anxious for real knowledge, and will not much longer put up with the shadow of it. Either the Teacher will find out a mode of communicating a knowledge of the learned languages in a shorter

time, and more efficaciously, than has been hitherto done, or the study of these languages will be relinquished altogether. If another mode be not taken to acquire Latin and Greek, our new Universities will be of no avail. This mode is here offered; it has been proved by above 20,000 examples. Its theory is as rational as its practice is successful. The Classical Teacher has already made a sufficient stand for the customs of his forefathers. It is time to yield to the united voice of reason, truth, and nature—of good sense and common honesty; for I will ask the Clergyman, the honest, conscientious Schoolmaster, if he can continue to make his pupil wade through Grammars, Exercise Books, and Dictionaries for years, for the attainment of what I have here proved may be obtained by a far easier, more certain, more effectual, more pleasing mode, in a few months? The answer is obvious; it will be that of an honest man, he will *try* the Hamiltonian System; and, in trying it, will give it fair play, and use, not the books of disingenuous and ignorant interlopers, but those of the author of the system.

Thus have acted the heads of the highly respectable schools of Hazelwood and Bruce Castle, which I have had pleasure in recommending to those who have done me the honour of consulting me on this subject. Thus has acted the Rev. W. Stevens, of Maidstone, whose pamphlet on the success of the experiments made on this system, in his Establishment, will be read with interest and pleasure by all who are in earnest for the diffusion of knowledge.

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After I had given this pamphlet to the press, the Westminster Review for April has appeared, with a long and able article on this system. The writer appears to

have had a better opportunity of witnessing its effects than the writer in the Edinburgh Review. He analyses it with talent and interest, and proves, by a strict philosophical anatomy of its principles, first, "that there is power enough in the system to produce all the effects which are said to be accomplished by it"—and, secondly, "that there is evidence enough to prove that these results are actually effected by it."

It is not a little singular that these eloquent friends of the Hamiltonian System condemn alike the mode in which it has been offered to the British public ; and, apparently, on account of that mode, which they, however, acknowledge was unavoidable, and, without the slightest personal knowledge of me, think it useful to their argument to speak of me with the least possible degree of courtesy that one gentleman (if they will allow me that title) can speak of another. This good, however, results from this, it will not be thought that these articles were written to please *me*—far less that I paid for them. This writer thinks it necessary to intimate that he thinks my talents, whether natural or acquired, of a very humble order. But is not this a singular reproach to the author of a system which he signalizes with so much talent, as "*being a most extraordinary improvement on any plan which the ingenuity of the human mind had hitherto devised ?*" Is it not, I say, a singular reproach to make, "*that I have done it without talent ?*" You have won the battle, routed the enemy, and after a twelve years' struggle, silenced your adversaries, and put a successful end to the war ; but you have no claim to personal respect or consideration—we are under no obligation to you, as you never commanded more than a few thousand men ! Might I not thus successfully retort ? Without talent, without learning, without wealth, without name ; an obscure individual,

as these gentlemen are pleased to represent me ; after having passed five and twenty years, not in my study, but in my counting-house, I have accomplished what Locke and Milton, and Dumarsais, and a number of other wise and good men, have acknowledged and deplored the want of for centuries ; namely, a rational and efficient system of Education, which they have attempted to supply, and failed in doing ; and I have accomplished this without being indebted to these writers, or any other for a single principle of my system, for a single idea. Go, you gentlemen of wealth and learning, you men of connexions and talents, you men who have your rulers for your patrons, and can wield all the influence of the Edinburgh and Westminster Reviews,—go and do something great and good and useful, in proportion to the magnitude of your means when compared with mine ; and, in the mean time, while you render a service to your generation, and, I trust, to every succeeding one, in pointing out the utility of the Hamiltonian System to teachers and parents, do not point the finger of scorn at the author, or deprive him of the merit, as well as the profit, of his invention—do not neutralize all you have said of good and useful in the system, by giving your countenance to books utterly at variance with that system, contemptible, in a literary point of view, false and incorrect, as Hamiltonian ; and which, by the most disingenuous manœuvres, have been sold in every part of the kingdom as the production of the author of the Hamiltonian System. I do not believe there was any intention of this kind in the mind of the writer of the article in question ; but as it mentions but few of the books published by me, the series of which constitutes the very essence of the system when applied to schools, his remarks may do the same mischief that those of the Edinburgh Review effected, by dividing the



attention of the Teacher, and leading him to believe that any other book may do as well as mine, and that he may deviate widely from the system with impunity. This idea, and the wish to amalgamate other systems with it, has not hitherto given the system fair play, especially in the hands of inexperienced persons, who have not condescended to consult the author himself, upon whom, however, falls infallibly the blame of failure in every experiment made, whether on the Hamiltonian System, or in opposition to all its dictates and principles.

Upon the whole, I think the system much indebted to the writer of this article. He has not only generally given a faithful analysis of the system and its necessary results, but he has actually forestalled, as my readers will perceive, much of what I have here written; which he was enabled to do by his having in his hands the second edition of the essay written in New York, to introduce my mode of teaching, as detailed in the beginning of this pamphlet—an advantage which I had not myself. The writer is, therefore, entitled to the homage of my gratitude, which I most sincerely and respectfully offer him; with the reserve, however, of one or two passages, to which I think it necessary briefly to reply.

Five persons are by no means the best possible number for a class. A man totally inept in the mode of teaching on this system could alone have given such information to this writer. I have never had better classes, public or private, than those which counted from fifty to one hundred members; never had any whose exercises were more interesting and pleasing to each particular member, nor in which a better progress has been made; while, at the same time, the incorrigibly idle, the really occupied, those obliged frequently to be absent, can get a fund of useful instruction without being exposed to the



criticism of a private class, because they may be silent. It is truly wonderful that this enlightened critic should have overlooked one of the greatest advantages of the system—that which decides more distinctly than any other its superiority over the Lancasterian System,—that here, monitors are superfluous ; instead of a dozen boyish and ignorant teachers, one able professor teaches the whole—teaches with the same facility as many as can conveniently hear him.

The Reviewer does me injustice, though I hope and believe involuntarily, when he remarks, that “when Mr. Hamilton speaks of a language being to be acquired in so many hours, the number stated by him is not the true number required to be a proficient in the tongue ; to these must, in all fairness, be added the number spent in reading in private.” Now, I have never used such language as is here imputed to me. I have never, either in my lectures or advertisements, asserted that a language was to be learnt *in any number of hours*, nor used any phrase corresponding to it ; nor ever held out such an idea to my pupils or the public. I have, on the contrary, *in every public lecture*, without, I believe, one exception, made use of language tantamount to this—“Ladies and gentlemen, if you will do me the honour to become my pupils, I will guarantee that you shall be able to read a French book with facility in two or three sections ; but if, when you have acquired that faculty, you should not be disposed *to read*, then do not come to me for the two latter sections, for I can neither teach you to write nor speak.” I appeal to every pupil I have ever taught for the correctness of this statement, and whether I have not constantly held the same language ; and yet, strange to say, I begin to doubt—I fear to mention it, before the thing has been fully authenticated by repeated ex-

periments,—I say, I fear to mention the possibility of teaching a person to write and speak who may have read only my three class books, the Gospel of St. John, Perrin, and the Recueil Choisi ; but the continuance of the improvement in speaking and writing of several members of my public class at present in Manchester, who, I know, have never read more than those books, and perhaps not all those, becomes every day more striking and astonishing. *To read* is, as I have so often said, the secret to know all things ; and among them it is, above all, the only secret to acquire the words of a language ; but if the class be rightly and diligently exercised in the use of the verbs, as I have already mentioned, after the knowledge only of the class books, I believe it an indubitable and pleasing truth, that he may get the use of the smallest possible vocabulary in writing and speaking. But this vocabulary can only be acquired by the use of the books in question, for they alone give the *precise* meaning of the word ; nor would a vocabulary acquired on the common plan ever produce such a result.

To conclude.—The Hamiltonian System has now passed through as severe an ordeal to test its practicability and usefulness, as perhaps any other invention which can be mentioned. Opposed, step by step, during twelve years, by those who might justly be supposed the best qualified to judge of its merits, it has triumphed over all opposers, and diffuses its benign and genial influence gradually through the minds of those who once opposed it with violence. It may, therefore, be now used in schools or private teaching, in the same manner as any other system which preceded it, without subjecting the teacher to those rules which the author thought necessary to prescribe to himself.

Let, then, the teacher apply the system diligently and

honestly ; but, having done so, he ought not to be obliged to *guarantee any thing*. The pupil who will attend, who will read, will not the less make the utmost progress that the system is capable of producing ; while the teacher will no longer be the victim of his confidence in the reality of its powers, by the incorrigible dulness or idleness of his pupil, whether child or adult.

The course may be given quarterly or monthly, with as much advantage as by sections, which were established for the sole purpose of pointing out to the pupil the exact quantum of knowledge guaranteed to him in a certain number of lessons. While this progress was considered impracticable, it was necessary, in my opinion, to guarantee it to the pupil, in order to convince him there was no delusion ; but as this fear can no longer exist, the division into sections is by no means of indispensable necessity in the system. Nevertheless, I think this mode of ascertaining the progress of the pupil preferable. But I would advise the Hamiltonian teacher to do with all languages as I have myself done with the Latin and Greek ; not to stipulate an absolute proficiency in any fixed number of sections, but continue to give instructions until the pupil is satisfied he possesses as much as his teacher can communicate. This arrangement will render its adoption easy to every professor of languages, and will prevent the discontent of those who, having neglected their class, are, on the plan hitherto adopted, without a remedy.

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Almost every literary publication of respectability in the United Kingdom has spoken favourably of the Hamiltonian System ; the following extracts, expressive of the sentiments of a few of them, did not appear in the first edition of this pamphlet :—

*Extract from the Atlas of March 18th, 1827:—*“ The plan of teaching languages according to the system named after Mr. Hamilton, has been the subject of much controversy. The writers have scribbled about it and about it, but do not appear to have satisfied either the public or themselves. It is, in fact, a question of experiment. All the reasoning in the world could not settle it; but the application of a little judgment and good sense may enable the experimentalist to conduct his investigation in the shortest and safest manner, and to draw from it sound and practical inferences. The mode of teaching languages by grammar is this:—a language is first resolved into its component parts, and by examining the relations of each class of words to one another, general rules are thence drawn for the reconstruction and re-arrangement of them. When these rules are reduced to their most general form, they constitute, with the addition of a few definitions and axioms relative to language fundamentally considered, what is called a grammar. A child is taught to remember these abstract rules for the composition of words. When it is supposed he has acquired a sufficient stock of them, a piece of language in its constructed state is put into his hands, which it is required of him to submit to two processes: the first is to learn the value of each word separately; and the next to learn their mutual relations, and thus ascertain the value of the whole as connected. The first process is performed with the aid of a dictionary; the second with the aid of the grammar, either bodily, or as its rules are remembered. By a constant use of the dictionary, the student in time acquires a vocabulary: by a rigorous application of the general abstract rules, he learns to apply them to particular cases. Take the following simple instance:—It is given to the student to extract the meaning out of the following sentence: *Do tibi librum*. The dictionary gives him the words, and the



grammar shews him that verbs “of giving” govern two cases—an accusative of the thing given, and a dative of the person to whom the thing is given: he gathers, therefore, that the sentence means, “I give you a book.” If he meets with the verb *do* again, he expects two cases after it, looks, and probably finds them; if he finds the same words again, he may recollect their meaning. An assiduous practice of this exercise makes a boy, if he is quick and attentive, a tolerably good Latin scholar in about seven years.

✓“The Hamiltonian plan is nearly the reverse of this. A piece of composition is put into the student’s hands in its entire state. He is supplied with the exact value of each word as it stands. By continuing this comparison a sufficiently long time, he acquires a vocabulary without the aid of dictionary and grammar. This vocabulary is of a peculiar kind; it embraces dictionary, grammar, and phrase-book. For not only is the word given as to meaning in one form, but in all forms. Not only is it found in *do*, ‘I give,’ but *dare*, ‘to give,’ and *dant*, ‘they give;’ not only *tu*, ‘thou’ but *tibi*, ‘to thee,’ and *te*, ‘thee.’ Now, as words are continually occurring, and as a man really stands in need of no very large *supplex verborum* in order to read many books and hold much conversation, there seems little doubt but that these purposes are more rapidly answered by the latter system. If it were desirable to make a perfect master of a language; if it were desirable that each student of Latin should prove a Quintilian, and a life was not considered too much to devote to the object; then the plan pursued in our public schools would undoubtedly be the best. For the ordinary purposes, however, for which Latin is learned in this country, the Hamiltonian plan is certainly the most rapid, and the most efficient, and it quickly enables the learner to read the ordinary books; and if he is inclined to carry his investigations deeper, there is nothing to pre-



vent him. In the case of all modern languages, we think there is even less doubt of its superiority. If a person were to visit Germany and learn German, as Mr. Coleridge describes himself to have done, without a master, without a grammar, and solely by experience, this would be the Hamiltonian plan ; which is, in short, the mother's plan with her child. In the infant's case, things are interpreted by corresponding words ; in the case of two languages, the thing is a word, which is explained by a corresponding word. The Hamiltonian plan has another advantage ; it is the readiest way of acquiring the idiom of another language. This is done by the contrast between the perfect foreign phrase, and the very imperfect English phrase. Suppose the Italian phrase to be thus interpreted,—

*innanzi*  
before

*ai*  
to-the

*piedi*  
feet,—

the very awkwardness of the English expression impresses the difference on the memory almost indelibly.”

*Extract from the Atlas of May 10, 1829 :—*“The difficulty of establishing a new system that goes fundamentally to uproot our preconceived notions and confirmed habits, is much greater than people generally suppose ; there are old prejudices to be conquered, settled principles to be set aside, and popular modes to be unlearned. Improvements are frequently of so startling a kind, that they are received as innovations, and the inventor or introducer of novel theories has not only to struggle against predilections, but to argue the age out of its scepticism. ‘It were good, therefore,’ says Lord Bacon, ‘that men, in their innovations, would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarce to be perceived ; for otherwise, whatsoever is new is unlooked for ; and ever it mends some, and pains others ; and he that

is holpen takes it for a fortune, and thanks the time; and he that is hurt, for a wrong, and imputeth it to the author.' It is for these reasons that a necessity yet exists for a further and repeated elucidation of the Hamiltonian System, which has been long enough before the world to spread the knowledge of its peculiar merits, and which has excited more discussion than any other plan for the teaching of languages that has ever been promulgated. If it have not crept into the confidence of the majority of thinking people, the source of its failure must not, *prima facie*, be attributed to its internal imperfections, but rather to the obstacles that impede conversion. Few persons are willing to acknowledge that they have been all their lives in the wrong; and the natural tendency to defend, even at the expense of judgment, those opinions which they wanted sagacity to controvert themselves, operates to prevent them from admitting the fallacies that have been exposed by others.

"In the pamphlet before us, Mr. HAMILTON again propounds his system, with a slight sketch of the history of its progress. This little history furnishes so many instances of the resistance offered to his scheme by those who were impressed with the paramount 'wisdom of our ancestors,' that we are induced to present our readers with a few illustrative passages. The first suggestion of the system is thus candidly related by Mr. Hamilton."

After having made some extracts from the first edition of this pamphlet, the Reviewer proceeds:—

"At first the progress of his pupils was slow, and he discovered that the General (D'Angeli's) plan of parsing as well as translating would do only with linguists; this discovery revealed to him, for the first time, that principle which forms a distinctive and remarkable feature in his system, the postponement of grammar until his pupils had accomplished half their reading course, during which the

inflexions of the verbs, and the changes of the other declinable parts of speech were rendered familiar, and became practically fixed in their minds. The success of the students spread his fame; 'and,' continues Mr. Hamilton, 'I had in the first short year about seventy pupils who paid me twenty-four dollars each, for half a course, and thus confirmed me a teacher for life.' From New York he proceeded to Philadelphia, where his success was still more flattering, and where he perceived that his mode of translation was, in fact, a strict analyzation of grammar; a principle which he is surprised should have escaped the genius of Milton, Locke, Clarke, and Dumarsais. As he progressed in practice, new lights broke upon him; and, at last, after a long experience, he was enabled to bring his various principles into a more regular form, and to produce that system which properly bears his name.

"The opposition given to Mr. Hamilton while his system was in course of development, was the natural result of that scepticism with which all novel theories are received; and it is well for the interests of education that an inquisition so uncompromising should have sat upon so important an innovation; for we sincerely believe that it has fully established the utmost promise which even the sanguine teacher anticipated. Some of the objections taken to harass Mr. Hamilton were unworthy of literary men; he was repeatedly taunted with his mode of advertising, which it was asserted bore too much the appearance of quackery. To this taunt there are two answers; first, that his mode of advertising, whether judicious or injudicious, had nothing to do with the intrinsic value of his system, which, in fairness, should have been tried upon its own internal merits alone; second, that he possessed no other means of making the world acquainted with his system, except by giving it publicity in the usual way. All

the errors, too, of those professors, who, adopting a part of the Hamiltonian System, and retaining a portion of their own, had endeavoured to create a motley scheme of instruction less decisive than either, were charged upon him as proofs of the deficiencies and inconveniences of his plan. Against numerous equally fallacious and superficial objections he had to contend: the practical results exhibit the individual and his labours in the most favourable point of view. He has no reason to complain of resistance, since it has produced such convincing evidence of his strength.

“ It is unnecessary to discuss this system in detail. We believe the public are very generally acquainted with it; but we are anxious to close our notice with a few short observations in elucidation of those prominent points that appear to distinguish it from all others that have been hitherto brought into operation. Perhaps the first peculiarity that strikes the inquirer 'is, that Mr. Hamilton teaches languages first and grammar after. This is a complete inversion of the old mode; but it is more consistent with nature. Grammar is undoubtedly founded upon language, and not language upon grammar. Language existed first, and grammar arose afterwards as a conventional harmonizer and assistant. The obvious course, therefore, is to obtain some acquaintance with the character of a language before we study the method of using it correctly. It is evidently absurd to teach the nomenclature and government of a science, of the component materials of which we are wholly ignorant. Schoolmasters formerly made pupils get a grammar by rote in Latin, before they knew one word of Latin. To substitute a real for a mechanical progress seems to be the object of this new, but simple principle. The next feature of novelty is the literal and analytical translation adopted by Mr. Hamilton: Words are rendered strictly by corresponding parts of speech, preserving accu-



rately the cases, moods, tenses, and persons of the original. Thus, although some inelegancies and barbarisms of necessity creep into the translation, the pupil is taught the exact value and relation of each word ; and learns insensibly, by a close analysis as he proceeds, the whole grammatical construction of the language he studies. Much labour, much time, much perplexity, is saved by this process, which smooths all the difficulties and embarrassments in the way of acquiring profound philological knowledge. In all former systems the pupil was disgusted by being forced to labour over tasks he did not understand ; in this system he comprehends every word as he goes on, and by interesting his understanding, his attention is fixed, and his curiosity excited. The association of the mind and memory is cultivated ; the learner easily recollects that which is thoroughly clear to his sense ; and finding that at every step he gains a portion of knowledge familiarly and quickly, he will require no further incitement to persevere, than the pleasure he receives in increasing his intellectual resources without toil or delay. In the pronunciation, also, of foreign languages, Mr. Hamilton has cleared away the old impediments. He has discovered—if that can be called a discovery which is merely the assertion of a truth that had been long manifest to people who reflected on the subject—that the simple sounds of all languages are the same, the signs only by which they are represented differing. The admission of that fundamental principle gets rid of a world of pains-taking ; if people can be taught to pronounce *pour* as if it were spelt *poor*, *mais* as if it were spelt *may*, &c., they would perceive that a true pronunciation is much simpler than it seems. Two advantages belong to the system that deserve to be noticed. As many pupils may be [taught at the same moment as can be collected in an apartment together : for the instruction that guides and



corrects one is equally applicable to all who are within hearing ; and the labour of the pupil is transferred to the teacher, who, as Mr. Hamilton quaintly expresses it, ‘ teaches, instead of ordering to learn.’ These advantages are important, and worthy of more extensive consideration than we can afford to give them ; however, we may have sufficiently discharged our duty, by keeping before the public a system that is equally honourable to the age, and to the man who had the firmness to persevere in its production. Our opinions are not lightly delivered ; we have examined all Mr. Hamilton’s books, we have observed his mode of instruction in full operation, and we are fully impressed with the practicability and utility of his plan. It abbreviates the period of study, reduces the amount of labour, and increases, beyond all other systems, the actual acquirements of the pupil.”

*Extract from the Atlas of May 30th, 1830 :—*“ There is a strong resemblance between the systems of Hamilton and Jacotot. They both teach language by gradation and natural means. But it is in the main feature of difference between the two systems that our difficulty lies. The Hamiltonian system seems to rely less upon the process by which it produces its effects, and more upon the taking advantage of the effects when they become visible. It reaches the memory through the understanding, impressing its instructions mainly by the force of conviction. It instils into the mind a clear notion of the nature of things, rather than their conventional types and agents. It works less by the association of ideas—which, after all, must be involuntary—than by the ideas themselves. On the other hand, the system of Jacotot is vigilant and severe in its means, depending for its effects upon the immediate rigour of its progress, rather than its general influence. It reverses, or nearly so, the Hamiltonian doctrine, and ad-

dresses the understanding through the memory, by first making its impressions deeply, and then relying upon the mysterious operations of the mind for the classification and application of the knowledge thus tattooed upon the retention. It is so minute and painful in its details, that the probabilities are, that the pupil, in his extreme watchfulness of the forms and representatives of wisdom, will hardly become wise.

“In throwing out these hints, we have no desire either to encourage a useless controversy, or unnecessarily impugn a system that is so largely applauded by some of the literary men of the Continent. In the discharge of our critical office, it becomes us to state truly our opinions. If they be erroneous, we are open to conversion.”

*Extract from an article on “the Hamiltonian System of teaching Languages,” in the Academic Review for Sept. 1827 :—*“The Hamiltonian system, like many other things, has been much talked about, and written about, and very little understood. The subject is interesting and important; and as we have had an extensive practical acquaintance with that and other methods of teaching, and have no interests to serve, or predilections to indulge, except such as are suggested by intrinsic merit and general utility, we feel entitled to have our *say* upon the subject, and to receive all the attention which our readers may think proper to bestow upon us.

“Mr Hamilton, like all other innovators, has had great a deal of opposition—and that not of the most liberal kind—to contend with: he has been reviled, and his system condemned, by those who admitted they knew nothing of the man, and who proved, by their writings, that they were quite as unacquainted with his system: but he has no reason to be dissatisfied with the result.

“That Mr. Hamilton laid himself open to the charge of

*quackery*, when he first solicited the attention of the public in this country, we are not inclined to deny. And who that presumes to deviate from the beaten tract of custom, and ‘wisdom of ancestors,’ can hope to do himself justice and avoid that imputation? The monkish manufacturers of missals and breviaries denounced Faustus as a dealer with the devil! Galileo, who maintained that the earth went around the sun, was obliged to eat his words.”

After detailing the process by which words and practical grammar are communicated, and its astonishing effects on two of his young friends who attended one of Mr. Hamilton’s classes, the writer continues :—

“ Our more learned readers will pardon us if we explain what is meant by an interlinear translation. It is simply that every word is translated, and its exact meaning in English placed beneath it, between *the lines* of the original: so that the foreign word always presents itself to the eye in immediate conjunction with its signification in English. But it is not by the medium of the eye only that this system produces its effect; the continual oral repetition of the words by the teacher and pupils makes an impression through the ear which is not easily obliterated. And this repetition produces no tedium, because the words are arranged in sentences, and connected with ideas. Would not any one rather read ‘*L’Echo et le Hibou,*’ or, ‘*La Guenon et sa Guenuche,*’ than two or three columns of words in a dictionary? The principle exemplified every hour in common conversation: we repeat the commonest words of our native tongue a hundred times a day, and are never tired.”















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